**How does Priestley present the views of the inspector in ‘An Inspector Calls’?**

“We have to share our guilt”

Impartial – contrasts with the clear gaps in the play”

“burnt her inside out”

**Inspector**

“taught it in fire and blood and anguish”

Impression of “massiveness” when he enters

Lighting change – omnipotent being

From “pink and intimate” to “brighter and harder”

In 'An Inspector Calls', Inspector Goole is used as a dramatic device, arguably acting as a mouthpiece for J. B. Priestley in order to convey the message of the play - for the audience to be more accepting of socialist ideologies to ensure society never reverts to being dominated by capitalism like it was before the two world wars. This would have a profound impact on the post war audience of 1945 as through their suffering, they would have realised the importance of unity.

**Inspector Goole is presented as an omnipotent, powerful figure throughout the play; his presence immediately has the power to change the light and cheerful atmosphere of the Birlings' dinner party.** The lighting changes from "pink and intimate" to "brighter and harder" once the inspector arrives. Here, Priestley's use of the adjectives "pink and intimate" have connotations of warmth and happiness whereas the comparative adjective "harder" opposes this. Priestley uses the inspector as a dramatic device. Not only could it be argued that the inspector is an immensely powerful figure but also that Priestley uses the specific stage directions that accompany Inspector Goole's arrival to act as a symbol for how he wants society to improve. The lighting before the inspector arrives suggests that the Birling family – who encapsulate a stereotypical portrayal of a middle class family – were happy whilst they were ignorant to the plight of the working class. The lighting change mirrors how Priestley wants society to change; he wants society to stop being ignorant to the plight of the working class. Additionally, the lighting change foreshadows the rest of the play; through Inspector Goole, Priestley will throw into relief the issues within Edwardian society symbolised by the bright light in which nothing can hide.

**Furthermore, J. B. Priestley uses the inspector to convey that he wants society to change and become more empathetic towards the plight of the working class instead of perceiving them as being disposable.** When the inspector arrives, he tells the Birling family about Eva Smith’s suicide in which she drank a lot of strong disinfectant that “burnt her inside out”. Here, Priestley’s use of graphic language and violent verb “burnt” evokes an emotional response with the post war audience of 1945 and the twenty first century audience alike. Priestley’s language persuades the audience to feel immense sympathy not only for Eva Smith but also for all of the working class; it could be argued that Eva Smith’s suffering and suicide is used as a metaphor to highlight the continuous struggled faced by the working class, throwing into relief the issues within society and how these problems are ignored by the wealthier classes. Priestley’s gory imagery alternately makes the audience feel profoundly guilty for they may realise how ignorant they have been to ignore the struggles of the working class and persuade them to change by being more empathetic.

**Priestley suggests that a pressing issue with the twentieth century society is that people are reluctant to take responsibility for their actions. This view is encapsulated through the use of the elder members of the Birling family, Arthur and Sybil – who do not take responsibility for their actions towards Eva Smith. However, Priestley uses the inspector to thwart this.** The Inspector states that if we share nothing else, “we have to share our guilt”. Here Priestley uses the personal pronoun “we” to give society a sense of unity, implying everyone must do the same and follow the inspector’s teachings. ‘An Inspector Calls’ was set in 1912, a time in which society was divided by not only gender but by social class. Here, Priestley’s use of the inclusive pronoun is paradoxical, subverting the audience’s expectation about a divided society. Augmented by Priestley’s use of the imperative verb “have to”, he persuades the audience to take responsibility for their actions towards other members of society in order for society to progress. Alternately, Priestley’s use of the verb “share” could further reflect Priestley’s socialist ideologies that wealth should be more even distributed within society, instead of the richer upper and middle classes being greedy. Priestley wants the middle and upper classes to transform from abusing their power to dominate and exploit the working class to instead being more responsible for their actions and treating people more sympathetically.

**Priestley uses the inspector to convey the consequences of what will happen if members of society do not change.** He states that we will be “taught” in “fire and blood and anguish”. Priestley’s use of a triplet of nouns act as metaphors for the two world wars. The entire play is used as a motif for the wars; if society proceed to not improve the way in which members of society treat each other, the world wars will repeat in an endless cycle until we learn. Here, the inspector is conveyed as an omnipotent being. ‘An Inspector Calls’ was written and first performed at the end of the Second World War therefore the contemporary audience will have experienced the perpetual suffering that come with them. Priestley uses the inspector to make the audience be fearful as they are persuaded to think that the inspector is a God-like character imposing judgement on society. This will persuade all audiences to change their actions and embrace socialist ideologies of caring for other members of society which is what Priestley intended them to do.

Priestley uses Inspector Goole as an imposing omnipotent being who is used to highlight the issues of society. Priestley wants the middle and upper classes to stop being selfish and exploiting the poor for their own financial gain, but instead be more generous and empathetic towards other members of the working class. The inspector is almost an impartial figure in the play for he does not fit into the distinct levels of society. This gives the audience the impression that the inspector is an unbiased figure; they will be persuaded to listen to him and change their views.